



Written by a Multifaceted Student Body, Whose Ambition is to Enrich and Enhance Your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

PARSHAT TETZAVEH

~ ח' אדר א' תשע"א ~

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MISSING WITH ACTION

RABBI AVI HOCHMAN

It is no where to be found. Look up and down, backwards and forwards, inside and out; you will not find משה's name mentioned in this week's פרשה. Why? Furthermore, the question is compounded by the fact that the omission seems to be deliberate.

The beginning of the פרשה begins with the words: "ואתה", instead of the usual-"לאמר משה". Over and over again, the תורה creates settings in the פרשה where משה's name, by all rights, should appear – only to exclude it from the text on each occasion.

The Utah Jazz had an extraordinary basketball player from 1984-2003. He was a mere 6'1 and 175 lbs. His name was John Stockton. Stockton is regarded as one of the best point guards of all time. What made him so unique? John Stockton holds the NBA records for most career assists and steals by considerable margins.

We are told in פרקי אבות, "איזהו המכובד? המכבד את הבריות", "Someone who is not always thinking about themselves, but the greater good of those around him, will inherently be honored. If you focus on how you can help those around you, then you are also helping improve the way you live your life. In the NBA, there is a strong focus on scoring points. To come to the realization that sometimes it is not about what I can do to better my career, rather how can I help my team and teammates excel in their game, is a rarity.

Rabbi Shmuel Goldin explains that this פרשה belongs to אהרן. This פרשה introduces the role that אהרן and his descendants will assume throughout the ages. משה is certainly present, however אהרן is the center of attention. משה, the greatest leader of our people, knows that, at times, each of us must step aside to allow others to shine.

With this idea in mind, we can now explain the difference between the classic stones on the חושן (breast plate) of the כהן and the stones on the אפוד (apron-like garment). The חושן had many individual stones, while the אפוד's stones were all the same. Rabbi Moshe Lichtenstein explains that the clothing of the כהן גדול illustrates the notion of personal balance in our lives. The stones of the חושן encourage us to express our individuality, while the stones of the אפוד highlight the need for indentifying with the collective whole. The חושן, the expression of individuality, was worn on the heart - the seat of our personality. The אפוד, the expression of our collective personality, was worn on our shoulders (upon which rest the burden of community). They have to remain attached.

Our role in society is two-fold. At times we need to express ourselves and the many talents that we possess. On the other hand, we also need to assist others and the community at large in order to help them stand out as well.

HONEST TO G-D

LIEL REINFELD ('11)

This week's *parsha* continues to deal with the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), which the Jewish People built during their trek through the desert. Hashem instructs Moshe to tell *Bnei Yisrael* to donate the raw materials necessary for the construction of the *Mishkan*. This was undoubtedly a successful campaign. The response of the Jews was so enthusiastic that Moshe subsequently announced that everyone should discontinue bringing donations; there were more than enough funds to turn the blueprints into an ornate haven for Hashem.

The *Beit HaLevi* notes that the commandment to build the *Mishkan* and its vessels does not make sense in terms of the chronological order of events that occurred. He suggests that the reason for this is to juxtapose the laws of the *Mishkan* with *Parshat Mishpatim*, which dealt with civil law and justice. Before one begins to be generous with his money, he has to make sure the money comes from a legitimate source or business dealing. Charity given from ill-gotten possessions is not viewed as actually "charitable" in the eyes of Hashem.

The *Beit HaLevi* compares this to *Lulav Hagazul*- the case mentioned in the *Gemarah* of someone who steals any or all of the *Arba Minim* for *Sukkot* and use them to fulfill the *mitzvah*. It is considered better for a person to not carry out a *mitzvah* at all than to use sinful methods.

Furthermore, the way that Moshe was instructed to command the Jewish People to donate towards the *Mishkan* seems somewhat unusual. The Torah states, "And they shall take (to) Me a donation." It is odd that the Torah doesn't say, "They will give Me a donation." On this peculiar wording the Midrash explains that one of the deeper meanings of these words is that G-d is exhorting us to "take Him" as well. The Midrash writes as if G-d is being quoted: "You have taken My Torah and My laws of justice (as is recorded in *Parshat Mishpatim*). Take Me along with them!" What does it mean that Hashem wants us to take Him along?

The *Beit HaLevi* answers as follows: Understanding the truth in Torah and rendering correct legal decisions are two things which are impossible to attain without G-d's help. This is why the Talmud states "whoever learns Torah, G-d learns opposite him." We need His help to come to the truth. The process requires us to seek Hashem's aid.

The *Beit HaLevi* continues to support this theory with various *psukim* from *Tanach*. The wise King Shlomo, at the onset of his career, prayed to Hashem to be given a heart that lends itself to discerning between good and evil in order to be able to properly judge the Jewish People. The verse in *Tehillim* states, "G-d stands in the council of judges" (Psalms 82:1). Hashem involves Himself in helping us view truth with clarity. This is how we accept G-d together with the Torah.

Needless to say, if one learns Torah without the proper seriousness and intellectual honesty, has preconceived notions, or with an agenda, he will not come to understand the true intentions of the Torah. Such a person will only come to misconstrued conclusions about what Hashem expects from us. Furthermore, it has happened that such people have set themselves up as authorities and led many others away from the true meaning of the Torah.

The entire *parsha* deals with bringing Hashem into the world. This is the champion of all achievements – to live with Hashem's presence among us. Everything else that a human being can attain pales in comparison to this great accomplishment. Our forefathers lived with Hashem's presence for over a thousand years, and we have the ability to reinvent this holiness. It requires effort, study, and commitment. May we merit seeing Hashem in our daily lives.

WE ARE OUR OWN LIGHT

SHOSHANA LINZER ('12)

When describing the ideal olive oil one uses to light the menorah in the *Beit Hamikdash*, the Torah insists on only using the purest of olive oils (*shemen zayit zach*). What is the significance of using oil? Furthermore, what is the inherent value in using **olive** oil? Why wouldn't the purest form of another oil suit Hashem's needs?

Continued on page 3

Shoshana Linzer continued

Yirmiyahu the Prophet relays Hashem's words to the Jewish people, calling them by the G-d given title of *za'it ra'anan*, a leafy olive. Why does Hashem draw the comparison of the Jewish people to an olive and how does it explain why Hashem commands the specific use of olive oil when lighting the menorah?

Just as oil does not mix evenly with water or most other liquids, the Jewish people cannot fully assimilate with other nations. Despite constant attempts throughout history of Jews trying to rid themselves of their true identities in order to "blend in" better with their surrounding non-Jewish neighbors, they ultimately do not succeed and are often rejected. Hashem chooses to let Himself shine through the oil of the menorah as a way of reminding the Jews that He will always be on their side, even when the rest of the world is against them.

The way in which the oil is retrieved from the olive is through a vigorous and time consuming process of being ground repeatedly by a large stone in order to salvage the first few drops of oil. These drops are then designated to be used in the *Beit Hamikdash*. It is interesting to note that when the olives are beaten and put through a laborious process, what emerges is something so pure and holy that it is reserved solely to be used for the menorah. Tragically, a similar sequence repeatedly occurs to the Jewish people. They are beaten, persecuted, and denigrated wherever they go, yet despite these atrocities, they continue to resurface, with their faith in Hashem fully intact.

The use of olive oil not only shows the external uniqueness of the Jewish nation in our ability to resist assimilation, but it also stands as a testament to our capability to rise above the adversity in our lives and, instead, lead a life enriched with Torah and love for Hashem.

CHOOSING TO NOT HAVE A CHOICE

ADINA SAN SOLO ('11)

The description and regal nature of the *bigdei kehunah* take center stage in this week's *parsha*. The Torah describes the four vestments of the *kohen* and the eight of the *kohen gadol* in great detail. We read that materials such as woven gold and jewels were used in many of the garments.

The *Gemara Zevachim* explains that if a *kohen* was not wearing his proper garments, he would not be able to perform his priestly duties. The garments donned by the *kohanim* are essential to the service of Hashem in the *Beit Hamikdash*, a service that is one of the three pillars on which the world stands (*Pirkei Avot* 1:2).

The Meshech Chachmah makes a unique observation about the *bigdei kehunah* by drawing attention to the *pasuk* which states that the garments were "*l'chavod u'litifaret*" - for honor and for glory. Normally, something achieves an honorable status when it is an accessory (has no practical function). For example, a king is most honored by his crown because this accessory is seemingly unnecessary. If something has a mundane function, then it normally does not give off a sense of honor or prestige. The *bigdei kehunah* are exceptions; they were needed in order to carry out the services in the *Beit Hamikdash*, yet their function was to bring honor and glory to Hashem.

From this we can learn a general lesson that is applicable in our daily lives. There is a duality present in our service to Hashem that almost seems contradictory. We have 613 commandments that are not optional. They are not spontaneous acts of love from us to Hashem. One could view them as strictly regimented and controlled acts that are expected and demanded of us, devoid of meaning.

Yet, when we perform the commandments – when we have a beautiful *Shabbat* with our families, when we are kind to those less fortunate, when we *daven* with *kavanah* – we feel a closeness to Hashem. Our souls are enriched with spirituality as we express our love for Hashem and our willingness to sacrifice for our Creator. The same acts which are absolutely necessary are acts that bring honor and glory to Hashem. True fulfillment is attained when we follow Hashem's master plan for each of us.

(Adapted from yutorah.org by Rabbi Maury Grebenau)

בגדי כהונה

SAGIV ZEHAVI ('12)

כל הפרשה עוסקת בהכנה לכהונה ובתפקידי הכהונה. כהונה לכהונה מצווה הקב"ה: "ועשית בגדי קודש לאהרון אחיך לכבוד ולתפארת" ומוקדשים ארבעים פסוקים לתיאור גזירת בגדי הכהונה והחומרים מהם עשויים. לכאורה תפקיד הבגדים ברור: "שיהיה נכבד ומפואר במלבושים נכבדים ומפוארים... כי אלה הבגדים לבושי מלכות ה'" (רמב"ן) - כיאה לכהנים משרתי ה'. אלא שאז נתקלים בפסוק: "והיו על אהרון... בגשתם על המזבח לשרת בקודש ולא ישאו עוון ומתו" - "בזמן שבגדיהם עליהם כהונתם עליהם. אין בגדיהם עליהם - אין כהונתם עליהם", כמו-כן חייבים הבגדים להיעשות לשמן-אחרת הן פסולים.

והשיא: "למה נסמכה פרשת בגדי הכהונה לפרשת קרבנות? לומר לך, מה קרבנות מכפרים אף בגדי כהונה מכפרים, כתונת מכפרת על שפיכות דמים, מכנסים מכפרים על גילוי עריות, אבנט מכפר על הרהור הלב, אפוד מכפר על עבודה זרה, מעיל מכפר על לשון הרע..." - והדבר מצריך הסבר מיוחד לתפקיד הבגדים! "ויעש ה'... לאדם ולאשתו כותנות עור וילבישם" - אלוקים ברא את האדם ערום, והוא בעצמו העניק לו את הכסות לעורו. הכל עשה האדם בעצמו, אבל לבוש - לא. "ברא ה' בכבודו ובעצמו לאדם ולאשתו כותנות עור ובהלבישו אותו נאמר לנו שאין הבגד דבר שבהסכמה בלבד, אלא תוספת למעשה בראשית, מעין עור שני שניתן לאדם מעין גופניות נאצלת יותר"

הלבוש הוא סימן ההיכר הראשוני וההכרחי לחברה האנושית, הוא סמל כבוד לאדם באשר הוא אדם, הוא הופך את האדם לכוהן במקדש העולם, לנושא הבשורה המוסרית. על-כן עורר הכהן בבגדיו אמת זו בלב העם כל פעם מחדש! עצם הופעתו במשכן בבגדי כהונה שניתנו לו מידי האלוקים וע"י צו מיוחד הזכירה למתבונן בו את דבר הענקת הכסות לאדם בתחילת דרכו בתבל - הענקה לשם תפקיד השמירה על המוסר מפני הבהמתיות. המודעות שעוררו הבגדים תרמה לתיקון החברה וכפרה כקרבן!

עם זאת הבגדים מבטאים את החריגה של האדם ממישור הקיום הטבעי-החייתי. איננו נכנעים לטבע העירום; אנחנו מלבישים אותו. אך לאיזה כיוון אנחנו חורגים מן הטבע? זה כבר תלוי בנו. הבגדים יכולים לבטא צניעות וכבוד; הם יכולים לבטא גם חוסר בוש ואפילו רוע.

הניסיון הזה נועד לכישלון: יש דברים שצריך להשאיר לשכל הישר. אי אפשר למדוד צניעות. מעבר לזה, בבגדים מתבטאים שיקולים ערכיים נוספים, מעבר לצניעות המינית. בגד יכול להיות מסודר או מרושל; שקט או ראוותני; מכובד או מזלזל. הבגד אינו עושה את האדם, אבל פעמים רבות הוא יכול להעיד עליו.

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RAVH@WYHS.NET

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7902 Montoya Circle
Boca Raton, FL 33433
Phone: 561-417-7422
Fax: 561-417-7028
www.wyhs.net